

Palestinian dies of wounds in Gaza

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — A Palestinian died in hospital on Monday one month after he was shot and wounded by Israelis in the occupied Gaza Strip, doctors said. Officials at the Gaza Strip's Shifa Hospital said Awad Abu Lehiya, 27, from Karara village, was shot in the chest on March 2 after Palestinians buried stones at an Israeli car in the Gaza Strip. At least one passenger opened fire, Palestinians said. In the West Bank town of Qalqilia, unknown assailants shot dead Ibrahim Mohammad Ali Najim, 33, on suspicion he was helping Israel, residents said.



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Iraqi rebellion appears crushed

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ ANNOUNCED Monday it had retaken the last border town from Kurdish rebels, and the dissidents admitted that they had been pushed out of the area.

The Iraqi News Agency (INA) said the town, Iraq's northernmost Kurdish city just across the border from Turkey, was freed from the rebels at noon local time (0900 GMT).

"The rebels were kicked out of the town and ran away in fear. A number of rebels surrendered to our units," said INA.

Rebel leaders including Masoud Barzani and Jalal Talabani, returning from exile, used Zakho as a base in the early days of the rebellion against the government of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

The two leaders later moved to

Dohuk, farther south, but that town fell to Iraqi troops Sunday. Kurdish rebel spokesman in Damascus said Monday that their Pashmurga guerrillas were withdrawing from major population centres.

On Sunday, the government proved its control over the third city, the oil centre of Kirkuk, by taking foreign reporters on a tour through its battle-ravaged streets.

INA reported on Sunday that Iraqi troops captured Erbil and Dohuk, saying Kurdish fighters fled, leaving their weapons behind. "The people of Dohuk and Erbil received our armed forces with national songs and cheering Presidents Saddam Hussein," it said.

At that point, rebel spokesmen in London and Damascus claimed their forces still held Erbil and Dohuk, about 50 kilometres

south of the Turkish border. But Monday morning, Kurdish fighters in Iraq conceded government troops had won the two cities.

A spokesman in Damascus for the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), led by Mr. Barzani, said he had no information on whether Zakho had fallen.

He said the KDP leader was somewhere in the mountains.

A spokesman for Mr. Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) said he had no word on the situation in Zakho either but that fighting was raging in the nearby town of Faysikhabur.

Mr. Talabani was somewhere in Dohuk province, he said.

In Ankara, the semi-official Anatolian news agency said Iraqi government troops Monday captured Habur on the Iraqi-Turkish border from rebel Kurds.

It said the troops used tanks

and helicopters to recapture the frontier village which was seized by rebels last month.

Irqi helicopters bombed the rebels and military convoys ferried reinforcements to Habur after it was taken, the agency said.

Kurdish rebels captured Habur about two weeks ago and boasted their red, green and yellow flag. It was later removed so as not to provoke Turkey.

Habur is the only official crossing point from Iraq into Turkey.

Turkey is opposed to an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq, fearing it would fuel separation among its own 12-million-strong Kurdish minority.

They make up about half of the total Kurdish population in the Middle East.

Rebel spokesmen said the rebels would regroup and counter-attack to try to regain Kirkuk,

which had been the Kurd's biggest prize in the rebellion which began in the chaotic aftermath of the Gulf war.

After retaking Kirkuk, the government said on Sunday, its troops moved on to smash rebel forces in Dohuk, 40 km from the Turkish border, and Erbil, 90 km north of Kirkuk, in a lightning offensive.

Kirkuk, which has changed hands several times during the fighting, appeared to be firmly under government control but almost deserted, according to Western reporters taken there on Sunday by the Iraqi government (see page 2).

The loss of Kirkuk, Erbil, Dohuk and Zakho — would leave Sulaimaniya, near the Iranian border, as the only major town still in rebel hands.

A spokesman for PUK re-

ported battles in the Makhmour area southwest of Erbil.

The Kurds and Shiite Muslims in the south began simultaneous but apparently uncoordinated rebellion after the Gulf war at the end of February.

Some Kurds said the flight of hundreds of thousands of Kurds from the cities for the first time had a disastrous effect on morale.

Iraqi troops moved against the Shites. INA said the Iraqi government was supplying food to the recaptured areas.

INA quoted the newspaper Al Joumhuriya as saying Monday that searches in Erbil and Kirkuk produced "weapons, equipment and documents that confirm the involvement of more than one foreign party in the events of March in the region."

The countries were not named.

but Iraq has accused Iran of helping the insurgents in the past. Iran denies the claim.

INA also said that Iraq had told the United Nations that March 30-31 the United States had carried out 92 aircraft sorties, mostly over Baghdad.

The enemy conducted its sorties for purposes of provocation and reconnaissance. Its aircraft repeatedly flew over the city of Baghdad at low altitude," the INA report said.

Reuters reported from Sufwan, in U.S.-held Iraq, that troops loyal to the government have regained total control of southern Iraq and army units have been leaving to fight Kurdish rebels in the north.

"The Iraqi troops established total control in the south in the past three or four days and they are now moving north to handle

the Kurdish problem," one U.S. officer told Reuters.

But one group of Egyptian construction workers reported continuing skirmishes between government troops and Shiite rebels in Amara on the Tigris River near the border with Iran.

Captain William Schafer, speaking at Checkpoint Charlie, the last U.S. position on the road from Kuwait to Basra, Iraq's second largest city, said Iraqi troops had apparently been cutting off escape routes for refugees, rebels and deserters.

The numbers arriving at the checkpoint had dropped Monday to about 20 from about 50 a day previously, he added.

In the past fleeing rebels reportedly asked U.S. troops to intervene. "Now they have no more

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Israel's crackdown actions seen as counter-productive

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli moderates and Palestinians said Monday a proposed crackdown in the Israeli-occupied territories would not stop violence but increase it.

Palestinian leaders said the measures were Israel's signal to the United States and its own hardliners that it would not bow to international pressure to cede occupied Arab territories as part of a wider Middle East peace settlement.

They said harsh measures such as increased expulsions and restrictions on Palestinian entry to occupied Jerusalem would foil

resentment and worsen economic hardship among the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Israel's inner cabinet agreed Sunday to expel Palestinians deemed to have encouraged attacks against Jews, demolish their homes and further restrict access to Israel. This, according to Israeli leaders, would include occupied Arab Jerusalem, the country's religious, and economic heart of Palestinian society.

Israeli officials declined to give details of the cabinet meeting but Israeli media reported a decision to step up expulsions which have already been condemned by the

United States and the United Nations. Right-wingers called for the crackdown after a spate of attacks against Israelis.

"You cannot deal with the Palestinian problem with military crackdowns alone," retired General Binyamin Ben Eliezer said.

"By trying to separate the military from the political solution you're creating a Belfast situation," he told Reuters, referring to the sectarian violence in Northern Ireland.

Shimon Peres, head of the

(Continued on page 5)

Mubarak: Peace conference is essential, but not urgent

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said after meeting Syria's leader Hafez Al Assad Monday that an international peace conference on the Middle East was essential but did not need to take place immediately.

"The international peace conference is a must and a good umbrella for solving the whole (Arab-Israeli) problem," he said after talking to Mr. Assad for three hours.

Egypt and Syria have long been at odds on the Arab-Israeli conflict, but a new-found rapport between Cairo and Damascus has been cemented by their membership of a U.S.-led coalition that forced Iraq out of Kuwait a month ago.

"But we are not asking for an

international conference to convene right away. We need to make good preparations before holding it," Mr. Mubarak said at a joint news conference with the Syrian president.

Mr. Assad said little to journalists after his talks with Mr. Mubarak on Sunday evening and Monday. It was his first meeting since Gulf war hostilities ended on Feb. 28.

But Mr. Assad did say unrest in Iraq was an internal matter and there was little his country could do to end the turmoil. Syria and Iraq are ruled by rival wings of the Baath Party and have long competed for the leadership of Arab nationalists.

Although rebellions by Kurdish and Shiite Iraqis are bad for all Arabs, Mr. Assad said. "This

is an internal issue. Our ability to work to relieve what is happening is very limited."

Together Egypt and Syria have almost 60,000 troops in the U.S.-led coalition. Scores of thousands of the 540,000 Americans already have withdrawn, but Washington plans to leave an increased military air and naval presence indefinitely.

Mr. Mubarak and Mr. Assad, whose armies will be anchors of a projected Arab-based peacekeeping force in the Gulf, spoke briefly with reporters after the second session of consultations during a 24-hour visit by Mr. Assad. The two presidents agreed on the joint security force along with leaders of Saudi Arabia.

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BISHARA DENIES GCC decided to suspend aid to Jordan, PLO

BAHRAYN (R) — The six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) denied Monday it had taken a formal decision to suspend financial aid to Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) because of what is perceived as their support for Iraq in the Gulf crisis.

"There was general talk in regard to the relationship with Jordan and the PLO leadership, including the relationship of aid without mentioning any decision," he said.

In announcing the move on Saturday, Mr. Bishara, a Kuwaiti, said: "No forgiveness, no forgetting."

He said then that the GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait,

(Continued on page 5)

U.S. names firms, agents allegedly fronting for Iraq

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States acted on Monday to shut down Iraq's alleged secret network of arms traders and clandestine financial firms by identifying nearly 100 companies and agents as fronts for Iraq.

Washington froze the assets of the 52 businesses and 37 individuals it named as Iraqi agents in a step that could lead to the use of the money to pay reparations for the Gulf war.

A sewing machine concern in Bahrain, an air-conditioning firm in Britain and a bank in Brazil were among those identified by the U.S. Treasury as fronts for Iraq.

Thirty-one of the 52 companies listed are in Britain. All of them appear small and privately owned.

"Exposing these companies and individuals strikes a blow at Iraq's subterranean network in the world of arms trading and clandestine financial operations," Treasury Deputy Secretary John Robson said Monday in a statement.

The treasury also named 160 Iraqi-owned or -controlled merchant ships and prohibited their use by U.S. companies or individuals.

"The action is part of an ongoing investigation... of Iraq's worldwide arms and financial complex," it said.

The move against Iraq on the

financial front contrasts with Washington's reluctance to intervene militarily to help topple Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

Two of the companies identified — Bay Industries Inc. of California and Matrix Churchill Corp. of Cleveland — are in the United States. Neither could be reached for comment.

Individuals who do business with Iraqi agents can face criminal penalties of up to \$1 million per violation and prison sentences of up to 20 years.

Kuwait has accused President Saddam and his family of taking more than \$10 billion out of Iraq by skimming off a percentage of the country's oil sales for themselves over the past decade.

The Kuwait government hired Kroll Associates, an investigative agency, to investigate the affair.

U.N. consultations

The U.N. Security Council was meeting in closed session Monday for its first consultations on a proposed Gulf war ceasefire resolution.

The treasury also named 160

Iraqi-owned or -controlled merchant ships and prohibited their use by U.S. companies or individuals.

The United States and the other four permanent council members — Britain, China, France and the Soviet Union — were meeting privately to put the finishing touches on the proposed document.

PLO wary of U.S. peace talk

TUNIS (Agencies) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is wary of peace talk from the United States and will continue to encourage the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip until Israel withdraws, one of its leaders said.

Hani Al Hassan, a close associate of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, told a rally in Tunis Sunday night that Washington did not seem to have the courage to make Israel implement United Nations resolutions.

"(U.S. Secretary of State James) Baker went to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir but he didn't mention the idea of land-for-peace in front of him. Why? Because he's afraid of the Jewish lobby, afraid of the elections next year," he said.

"No doubt there are important moves about but we Palestinians know them well and we know that reliance on our own strength and our own guns is the only way to bring about a solution."

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The confrontation with the Zionists must not stop until you get your land back... this time we cannot accept from anyone any idea leading to the end of the intifada because stopping the intifada would mean losing our homeland."

Mr. Hassan rejected solutions based on autonomy for the West Bank and Gaza, municipal elections under occupation, or open-ended transitional periods.

But he said Palestinians in the occupied territories would welcome the chance to elect members of a new Palestine National Council (PNC).

PNC members from inside the occupied territories cannot attend the parliament because the Israeli authorities will not let them back if they leave.

"But if they (the Israelis) come and impose elections under occupation or elections for municipalities, the aim of that is to distract people with elections in order to stop the intifada," Mr.

(Continued on page 5)

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KUWAITIS demand elections

KUWAIT (R) — Prominent Kuwaitis and opposition leaders Monday sent the emir a list of demands urging him to set a date for parliamentary elections, for the elimination of favouritism and for popular participation in government.

Activists said the respectful but hard-hitting five-page document was sent to Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah and other leading members of the ruling family.

Similar demands to implement promised democratic reforms were also made by a group of resistance leaders — including army officers who survived the seven-month Iraqi occupation of Kuwait — during a meeting with the emir on Sunday, one opposition activist said.

The document Monday called on the emir to "set a date for free and fair elections for... parliament." Sheikh Jaber dissolved the previous parliament in 1986 at the height of the Iran-Iraq war, citing a foreign conspiracy to destabilise the emirate.

The document was signed by 96 Kuwaitis including leading members of the conservative Sunni Muslim Brotherhood, Shiite

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Two for one special; happy April Fool's Day

FOR ALL THOSE Jordan Times readers who did not notice that yesterday was April 1, we can only say happy fool's day. It was really special.

SORT OF two for one, folks. The stories, "Another rose-red city near Petra?" that appeared on page one, and "Huge, glassy crater outside Amman baffles scientists" on page three, were concocted for the purpose of not so much to trick or feed you untrue information. Rather, it was done so that you would have a good laugh either there and then or, better still, on the next day. If you fell for both jokes, perfect. If just for one, we promise to improve next time. We do, of course, apologise for any inconvenience they may have caused any reader, especially those fellow journalists who called in for leads to

Capture of Afghan garrison morale booster for rebels

ISLAMABAD (R) — A stunning Afghan guerrilla victory over government forces in Khost garrison near Pakistan has given the rebels a huge psychological boost after two years of political and military stalemate, Afghan and Western analysts said Monday.

Khost City fell to Mujahedeen fighters Sunday after the capture of the garrison's remaining airfield sparked a swift capitulation by thousands of defending soldiers.

Within three hours of the airfield being seized most of the government forces had surrendered. The last pockets of resistance were quelled by daylight on Monday, Mujahedeen spokesman Najibullah Lafraie said.

"This is a big achievement," said Mr. Lafraie, information minister in the guerrilla government-in-exile in Pakistan. "I believe that it will be very difficult for the regime to recapture Khost."

The city's fall after a two-week offensive was strategically irrelevant, a Western diplomat in Islamabad said, but its political and psychological impact could be far reaching.

"I am surprised. Nobody thought it would fall," he said. "The Mujahedeen were surprised themselves that it fell so quickly."

Mujahedeen reported they had captured more than 2,500 soldiers and found between 500 and 600 wounded soldiers and militiamen in the city.

The International Committee

of the Red Cross (ICRC), which has a war hospital in the Pakistani city of Peshawar, sent a team of doctors to Khost on Monday to evaluate the position.

An ICRC spokesman in Peshawar said they had brought in two extra surgical teams to handle an expected influx of up to 200 badly wounded.

The Afghan government news agency Baktar made no mention of Khost's fall on Monday but ran a detailed account of Foreign Minister Abdul Wakil's charge that Pakistan was directly involved in the fighting.

Pakistan, which has been the main conduit for arms supplies to the guerrillas during the war, has denied the allegation.

Khost garrison, lying isolated from other government forces about 25 kilometers from the border with Pakistan, has withstood all previous assaults during 12 years of civil war.

The Mujahedeen have had few successes in the fight to overthrow the government in Kabul since the last Soviet soldiers withdrew from Afghanistan two years ago.

A major assault on the eastern city of Jalalabad turned into an expensive fiasco, while faction fighting among the Mujahedeen groups led to a political and military stalemate.

The capture of one small provincial capital in central Afghanistan last year ended with the victors butchering scores of defenders after they surrendered.

This time Mujahedeen and

tribal fighters related to the civilian population of Khost pledged there would be no retribution and guerrilla leader Sibghatullah Mojaddidi formally requested the ICRC to intervene.

Afghan analyst Naim Majroob said the tribal fighters played a key role in the battle for Khost and were vital in persuading the defenders they would survive if they surrendered.

Most ordinary soldiers were to be released within a few days, Mr. Lafraie said, but some officers would stand trial for war atrocities.

Mr. Majroob said the Khost victory would strengthen the hand of the Mujahedeen in secret contacts with President Najibullah in Kabul.

The United States, which has been the main provider of arms to the Mujahedeen throughout the war, has lost much of its interest in the conflict since the Soviet forces left.

Moscow continues to prop up President Najibullah with arms and economic aid, but it has been negotiating with the United States on a mutual halt to arms shipments.

Pakistan says that it too supports a political settlement to the war. A senior Foreign Ministry official said he hoped Khost's capture could spur the search for peace.

"It will drive home for the other side that they have lost hope that time was on their side. This may break the logjam and I think the prospect for a political accord may brighten up."

Shomron: Iran could pose nuclear threat

TEL AVIV (R) — The outgoing head of Israel's armed forces said Sunday he was certain Iran was working towards nuclear capability which could threaten the Jewish state.

Interviewed on educational television, Lieutenant-General Dan Shomron said the damage done to Iraq's forces in the Gulf war had changed the balance of power in the region and removed a check on Iranian ambitions to spread Islamic revolution.

"I have no doubt that it is developing in the nuclear field, it is also buying long-range missiles," Gen. Shomron said. "We must keep an eye on Iran, it has the potential to threaten us."

In 1989 Iran said it had resumed construction of its Bushehr nuclear power plant, halted after the 1979 revolution but it has denied receiving help from Pakistan to build nuclear weapons.

Iran contributes to hardline Palestinian groups and backs the fundamentalist Shiite Muslim Hezbollah movement which has repeatedly clashed with Israel and its allies in South Lebanon.

Some Israeli security officials also believe that Iranian funds have reached the Islamic Jihad group, fighting Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Iran is some 1,000 km from Israel at its closest, about twice the distance from which Iraq fired its converted missiles into the Jewish state during the Gulf war.

Foreign press reports say Israel has a stockpile of nuclear warheads and the missiles with which to launch them. "I think we have a deterrent against her (Iran). I have no doubt that we have a deterrent," Gen. Shomron said. He gave no details.

New chief takes over

Ehud Barak took office as the Israeli army's chief of staff Monday telling his soldiers to expect "tough times" before peace reigns in the Middle East.

The Israeli-born Barak, 49, who climbed to fame as an undercover commando trooper, replaces Gen. Shomron.

The change-over ceremony was held at Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's office, where the Israeli leader officially promoted Barak to the rank of lieutenant-general and pinned the insignia to his shoulder.

Moss said that before the war he asked to be considered a conscientious objector but still carried out all orders given him.

He added: "I never intended to harm the ship or anyone on the ship. My only wish is to separate from the armed forces because of my religious conviction."

"I truly believe that all of this is happening to me simply because I am a Muslim," Shaheed said. "Just because I am a Muslim, that does not mean that I support Saddam Hussein. I have never supported his invasion of Kuwait and his so-called 'holy war' against the United States and the rest of the coalition forces."

Gen. Barak published a written order of the day for the troops saying "on the road to a desired peace the Israeli defence forces still faces tough times .. our forbearance, initiative and strength is what will tilt the balance."

Diplomats and Muslim fundamentalist officials say there is no sign of an imminent release of the 12 Westerners believed kidnapped in Lebanon. Most are held by pro-Iranian militants.

Kirkuk devastated by rebellion

By Wafa Amr
The Associated Press

KIRKUK — Charred bodies lay in the streets. Houses, shops and government buildings are battered by shellfire. But the government is firmly in control of this oil city that was the proudest conquest of Kurdish rebels.

Officials tools Western reporters on a 90-minute tour of Kirkuk Sunday, displaying damage they said was caused during the rebel occupation as well as by the fight to reclaim it.

Government officials said it took two hours last Thursday to recapture Kirkuk, a city of 500,000 people located 240 kilometers north of Baghdad. Rebels had taken it on March 19.

The army was clearly in control on Sunday, when reporters spent more than 90 minutes roaming its streets, sometimes without government officials.

Soldiers relaxed in the shade of tanks eating their lunch. An army helicopter flew overhead.

There was no sound of gunfire. Tamini Province Governor Haseeb Al Majid said the rebels were at least 50 kilometers away.

But the city itself was devastated.

Near the city's entrance lay three bodies, one of a child. Flies swarmed over the bodies, which were burned beyond recognition.

"They were left there because we have no cars left to carry them

and bury them," said Mayor Majid.

Residents said many more people had died inside the city.

Ali Hussein, a merchant, said he had seen 500 bodies removed from a downtown side street.

He also said rebels holding the city searched for members of President Saddam Hussein's ruling Baath Party and executed them.

More than a dozen burned cars and trucks, one with a corpse still inside, littered a main street leading to the city centre.

Many houses along the way were burned or partly demolished by what residents said was a fierce but brief battle between the army's tanks and artillery and the rebels' light arms and rocket launchers.

The owner of the Qasr Kirkuk Hotel, who did not give his name, said rebels fired rocket launchers at the Iraqi army from the roof of the hotel.

Most streets were nearly deserted. Residents said many fled residents had when the fighting started, but that some were starting to drift back.

Shops, restaurants, warehouses, hotels, government buildings and schools had been looted and burned, their floors a shambles of shattered glass and burned documents, furniture and equipment.

Mitchell urges U.S. to down Iraqi helicopters

WASHINGTON (R) — The leader of the majority Democrats in the Senate Sunday urged President George Bush to order U.S. forces in the Gulf to shoot down Iraqi helicopters being used by Iraq to attack rebels.

Senate majority leader George Mitchell added his voice to growing chorus seeking action from U.S. forces that would stop Iraq from using gunships against dissident Kurds in the north and Shiites in the south.

However, apart from the helicopters Mr. Mitchell backed Mr. Bush's policy of staying out of the fighting in Iraq.

The White House declared last week U.S. forces would take no action to prevent Iraq's government from using helicopters and U.S. officials said Sunday the policy had not changed.

Mr. Bush is under almost no domestic political pressure to intervene directly in the unrest gripping Iraq by supporting either group of insurgents.

Criticism of the president's hands-off policy on Iraq in the aftermath of the Gulf war is largely confined to newspaper editorials and scholars on Middle East affairs, many of whom complain that having repeatedly incited the Iraqis to overthrow the government he should now help those trying to do so.

Mr. Mitchell, a Maine Democrat, echoed the feeling of most in Congress when he said on NBC-TV's "meet the press": "I think the policy of non-intervention generally is a correct one."

However, he added: "I wish they would enforce the original policy of not permitting any aircraft, fixed-wing or helicopter, to operate against the rebels."

"The clear intent at the outset was to prohibit the use of aircraft which might threaten American forces, and that was both fixed-wing and helicopters, from operating. I think we should enforce that policy."

U.S. forces have shot down two Iraqi jets since a temporary ceasefire began on Feb. 28 because they violated a ban on the use of warplanes to which Iraq has agreed. But helicopters being used as gunships have not been shot down.

President Bush, speaking to reporters aboard Air Force One, would only say in response to Mr. Mitchell's comments: "Always glad to have his opinion. Glad to hear from him."

Mr. Bush also refused to comment on National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft's two-day Middle East trip last week. The London Sunday Express said the trip was part of an effort to win the release of Western hostages in Lebanon.

General Norman Schwarzkopf, the allied commander in the Gulf, said in a television interview last week he had been "tricked" into allowing the use of Iraqi helicopters over Iraq.

He said Iraqi officers told him the helicopters were needed to transport government officials because so many roads and bridges in Iraq had been destroyed by allied bombing.

White House officials have said U.S. troops will not take sides in Iraq's civil war though they hold a large section of southern Iraq.

"I don't think the United States can intervene in every internal conflict, however despicable the circumstances may be," Mr. Mitchell said.

Mr. Mitchell said he believed Saddam Hussein would eventually be removed as leader of Iraq. "It's clearly now the view of a large number of Iraqis, certainly the Shiites, who are a majority in the country, the Kurds in the north. I think eventually it has to penetrate the ruling party, which involves his supporters, the Baath Party and others," he asserted.

Asians demand role in post-war Gulf

SEUL (AP) — Asian and Pacific developing nations should have a role in the Gulf's post-war rehabilitation, Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas said Monday.

Any new world order emerging after the Gulf war should not infringe on individual nations' rights, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Liu Huaiqin added at the opening session of the 17th general meeting of the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

"It is not only appropriate but indeed vital that this session of the Commission should address the major global issues such as the post-war Gulf rehabilitation and the participation of ESCAP developing nations in the process," Mr. Alatas said.

Mr. Alatas said many developing nations in the ESCAP region suffered during the war because the Gulf was a major source of oil, a growing export market and a major employer.

Due partly to the Gulf war, the economies of many of these nations are expected to grow more slowly this year, probably not matching the average 5.4 per cent growth of 1990, he said.

Mr. Liu said of the post-war world: "Such a new order, in our view, should recognise the right of every country to choose its own social system, ideology, economic mode and course of development in light of its own national conditions."

His remarks were seen as reflecting China's veiled concern about a "pan-American."

China will continue to build "socialism with Chinese characteristics" and strengthen a market-oriented economic system, he said.

"Adherence to reform and opening-up will continue to be China's basic state policy," he added.

He indicated that China would open more of its coastal regions to foreign business, in addition to five special economic zones and 14 coastal cities.

Two U.S. sailors deny Gulf sabotage charges

SUBIC BAY, Philippines (R) — Two American sailors facing a court martial denied Monday they had tried to sabotage a U.S. aircraft carrier during the Gulf war in support of Iraq.

Airman Apprentice Abdal Shafee, 22, and Seaman Apprentice James Moss, 21, vehemently denied urging shipmates on the Ranger to take the captain hostage on the first day of the war.

"I have never supported Iraq or Saddam Hussein... I have always opposed Saddam Hussein, Iraq and war in general," Moss, from Columbus, Ohio, told a news conference in a cinema at the Subic naval base 80 kilometers northwest of Manila.

Shaheed, from Brooklyn, New York, and previously known as Kevin brothers, called himself a victim of incredible exaggeration, hysteria and paranoia."

He said he was arrested while praying abroad the ship the night the war started in January.

"I am a quiet guy who likes to keep to myself and play a lot... I never stopped doing my job and I did nothing but pray for a peaceful solution to the war," he said.

The charge sheet against the two sailors said they "attempted to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny or refusal of duty."

The date of their court martial is yet to be decided.

The charges carry a maximum penalty of 10 years confinement, dishonorable discharge and reduction in rank.

A third sailor, Danny Robertson, was also questioned but a navy spokesman said initial investigation found insufficient evidence to charge him.

Moss and Shaheed appeared before the press in their naval uniforms. They sat quietly after

reading their statements while their naval counsel, Lieutenant Brendan Ward and Victor Bernstein, answered questions.

The two lawyers said nothing at all happened on the Ranger and that the two accused did not commit any physical act.

"Essentially what we are talking about here is disloyalty statements. Nothing happened and the two denied that they made the disloyalty statements," Bernstein said.

The Ranger had about 5,000 men on board. Its captain, Ernest Christensen, ordered Moss, Shaheed and Robertson to Subic after their questioning on Jan. 17.

Moss said that before the war he asked to be considered a conscientious objector but still carried out all orders given him.

He added: "I never intended to harm the ship or anyone on the ship. My only wish is to separate from the armed forces because of my religious conviction."

"I truly believe that all of this is happening to me simply because I am a Muslim," Shaheed said. "Just because I am a Muslim, that does not mean that I support Saddam Hussein. I have never supported his invasion of Kuwait and his so-called 'holy war' against the United States and the rest of the coalition forces."

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More than one-quarter of U.S. troops gone from Gulf

RIYADH (AP) — The United States is trying to maintain its withdrawal of roughly 3,000 troops a day from the region while awaiting a permanent ceasefire, military officials say.

They would be withdrawn from Iraq within a matter of days after a permanent ceasefire is signed, according to Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, the commander of U.S. forces in the theatre.

More than one-quarter of the American troops have departed and the number remaining has already dropped to under 400,000, from a peak of 540,000, the U.S. central command said.

Jordan, Libya discuss trade, economic ties

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordanian and Libyan teams Monday opened talks here designed to promote trade and economic ties between the two countries and pave the way for the signing of new agreements on trade exchanges.

Ibrahim Badran, the head of the Jordanian side to the talks, emphasised the need for Libya to bolster their trade and economic cooperation, and said that the Ministry of Industry and Trade in Jordan was following a set of plans to achieve that goal.

Saleh Al Sheikhi, who heads the Libyan team, addressed the meeting by underlining the importance for the two sides to exchange visits by officials and businessmen to promote trade, to help achieve economic integration in the Arab World.

Mr. Sheikhi, who is also in charge of import-export operations in Libya, said during his visit to Jordan that he would tour Jordanian industries and examine the prospect of ordering Jordanian products for the Libyan market to replace those imported from foreign countries.

Mr. Ibrahim Badran, who is also Minister of Industry and Trade secretary-general, paid a visit to Libya last month and said that the two countries would be

updating a bilateral trade agreement signed in 1978.

He said that during his four-day visit to Libya he had discussed various economic and trade issues with Libyan officials and had toured production centres.

The two sides are expected to reach agreement on setting up Jordanian and Libyan trade centres in Tripoli and Amman and to organise joint trade exhibitions in the two capitals to promote the sale of national products in either country, Mr. Badran added.

He said that initial agreement was reached with Libya on business from the two sides meeting and discussing the prospect of launching joint ventures.

He said that Jordanian products were popular in Libyan markets and that several products, like chemicals, iron and steel had a good market in Jordan.

According to Mr. Badran, full agreements between the two sides can only be signed by the Joint Jordanian-Libyan Higher Committee during its meeting in Amman later this month.

The Libyan team, which is to spend several days in Jordan for talks, will also tour a number of economic and trade centres and industrial projects around the country.



Dr. Khaled Abu Rumman (right), head of the Chest Diseases Department at the Ministry of Health, Monday is interviewed by a Petra reporter on tuberculosis in Jordan (Petra photo)

Ministry of Health plans to eradicate tuberculosis

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Health Ministry last year discovered 301 tuberculosis cases in the Kingdom, 39 of them being non-Jordanians working in the country.

The total number of tuberculosis cases under treatment was 540, according to Dr. Khaled Abu Rumman, head of the ministry's Chest Diseases Department.

However, thanks to an intensive plan that has been in force since 1985, the number of cases continues to drop, said Abu Rumman in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Monday.

"The Health Ministry's plan, which has been implemented in two stages, has targeted groups more susceptible to tuberculosis, like children, and the ministry has gone a long way towards eradicating the disease in Jordan," Abu Rumman explained.

"During the first stage of the plan (1983-1988) the ministry succeeded in reducing the spread of the disease to less than one per cent for the six-year age group, while immunisation was continuing for all citizens," Abu Rumman said.

During the second five-year stage of the plan, which is still going on, the Health Ministry last year succeeded in reducing the rate of tuberculosis infection to half per cent, down from 0.8 per cent in 1982.

In the second phase of the plan, the ministry aims at covering the 14-year age group, at bringing down the rate of infection among them to less than one per cent, and at inducing immunisation to nearly 90 per cent of the first elementary class students in private and government

schools," Abu Rumman said. "The process of discovering new cases of tuberculosis is conducted in two forms and in the course of the Ministry of Health's determined move to bring about 100 per cent cure to those infected by the disease," Abu Rumman said.

The Health Ministry concentrates its search among the aged, inhabitants of densely populated areas, worker groups who mingle with the non-Jordanian workers, workers in restaurants, hotels and hairdressers.

On the other hand, the ministry conducts continuous checking and examination of persons referred to hospitals by health centres and of non-Jordanians arriving here for work," Abu Rumman added.

He said that last year registered a decline in the number of those infected by tuberculosis as fewer non-Jordanians arrived in the recent years, and also as a result of the Health Ministry's strenuous efforts to deal with the disease and eradicate it from Jordan.

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Hope of quick withdrawals from Kuwaiti banks set back

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Expatriates' hopes that they would be able to withdraw their savings and deposits in Kuwaiti banks following Iraq's withdrawal from the emirate have suffered a serious setback as it becomes clear that the Kuwaiti government only plans to allow limited and conditional withdrawals from the accounts for some months to come; and outward transfers are not permitted at all.

"I have left behind over 40,000 Kuwaiti dinars in three banks in Kuwait," said a Jordanian engineer who returned to Amman in October, three months after the Iraqis entered Kuwait. "I was hoping that I would be able to issue a cheque and withdraw the money, but I am now told that I have to be personally present in Kuwait, and I would be allowed to withdraw around 2,000 dinars a month," said the engineer agreeing to be identified only as Akram.

Banking officials said there was very little communication with Kuwaiti banks and it appeared that there was a standing regulation which demanded that the account holder or an immediate family member should be personally present to make withdrawals. Exception to this rule is made to Kuwaiti passport holders.

"We have been informed that the Central Bank of Kuwait is not authorising any foreign transfers in expatriates' accounts in Kuwaiti banks," said a senior executive at a Jordanian bank.

According to this executive, withdrawals are limited to 2,000 dinars per account per month, but some others said the limit was 4,000 dinars.

Mohammad, another expatriate, said he had sent a cheque through a non-Arab to be cashed at a Kuwaiti bank, but the withdrawal was not allowed.

"They will not grant me permission to return to Kuwait and they will not permit cashing of a cheque through another person," he lamented. "What am I supposed to do?"

Many Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates left Kuwait dur-

ing the seven-month Gulf crisis with little cash with them. Those who maintained accounts outside Kuwait were lucky since the freezing of all foreign accounts of residents of Kuwait ordered by the U.N. was lifted last month.

A senior official said the Jordanian government was following up the issue, but there was little hope of an immediate breakthrough to enable the tens of thousands of expatriates now in the Kingdom to recover their savings and deposits.

No definite figure is available on the actual amount held in deposit and saving accounts of Jordanian expatriates in Kuwait. Some reports put the figure at around \$2.5 billion to \$3 billion.

"This may be to the advantage of some people who managed to withdraw parts of their money during the crisis," said Mohammad.

A report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA) — a United Nations Agency — estimated that Jordanian expatriates had lost about \$4 billion in bank accounts and assets in Kuwait.

Many Jordanians have been living in Kuwait for decades, and what they lost represents life savings.

"I think sooner or later the Kuwaiti authorities will permit full withdrawals," said a banking official. "Right now, they are apparently trying to assess the situation and are hesitant to allow any big amounts to leave the country."

One of the first announcements made by the Kuwaiti monetary authorities following the end of the Gulf war in early March said all entries — deposit or withdrawal — made in any account in any bank in Kuwait since Aug. 2 were considered null and void and banks would deal with its clients as if the accounts were frozen as of Aug. 2.

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University for girls stirs controversy, but is generally accepted

By Nur Sati
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The National University for Girls in Amman is expected to open its doors to girls only, in September. After a thorough study conducted by specialists, the need to build a first scientific institution for girls was evident. However, since its announcement, peoples opinion varies divided.

The question is: Is it necessary to have a segregated university?

Dr. Amin Abdullaah Mahmoud, chairman of the national university maintained, that the decision to build the university stemmed from a "need for an effective and logical substitute of foreign universities by responding to the academic and scientific needs of the Jordanian and Arab women in the country."

He said that their own daughters went to work in a mixed environment, however, changed the parents' minds who admitted that it was a good experience and it was very natural for the two sexes to meet."

Other parents do not get convinced so easily. "If I cannot send my daughters to all girls university, I will not send them at all. Women are supposed to be protected. They get educated and then they get married," an elderly father of three daughters said.

The majority of the people interviewed by the Jordan Times preferred not to send their daughters to a mixed university for similar reasons.

"Because of this, we decided to build the university," Dr. Mahmoud said. "The programme entails a Bachelor of Arts degree in medical services and administration, social sciences and the arts fields," Dr. Mahmoud added.

Toujan Faisal, a leading woman activist, pointed out that "university education is not just about gathering information, but it is a social experience and part of growing up."

Mrs. Faisal, who does not agree with segregated universities, reasoned: "It would be very damaging to separate the two sexes because they are not separated in real life. We have made this into a taboo that must be broken. We have to start thinking of each other as human beings."

In the 1970s, Mrs. Faisal had a programme about women and work. At that time, women were encouraged to work, she recalled. "I met many conservative parents who did not believe in working women, but they had to agree to it for economic reasons," Mrs. Faisal told the Jordan Times.

"The fact that their own daughters went to work in a mixed environment, however, changed the parents' minds who admitted that it was a good experience and it was very natural for the two sexes to meet."

Mr. Aref, a middle aged father interviewed by the Jordan Times, said that there should be all kinds of schools, "she told the Jordan Times.

Fathers are also divided into two. There are those who welcome the idea as a relief: "Now my daughter can have a degree. She will be very happy," said Mr. Aref, a middle aged father interviewed by the Jordan Times, but there are other fathers — who say: "I would not send my children to a segregated school. I want them to grow up with confidence in themselves."

People in the end, however, always said: "One cannot argue with society. One has to have choices; a bit of everything," echoing the make up of the Jordanian society.

Bishara

(Continued from page 1)

On the pro-Iraqi stand taken by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, Mr. Bishara said: "Mr. Arafat took a very reckless course of action and will have to bear the consequences."

There was no official reaction from Jordan. A PLO spokesman said on Sunday the group deeply regretted the move which he said would destabilise Palestinians living under Israeli occupation.

Both Jordan and the PLO have not received any financial aid from the Gulf states since August.

The GCC states had long been the PLO's main financial backers and also provided tens of millions of dollars of aid to Jordan.

Albania

(Continued from page 1)

3,000 supporters at an impromptu outside party headquarters that "there will be no coalition" with the Communists, as Mr. Ali had suggested two days before the vote.

"Yesterday, he marked not a Democratic victory, but a victory for democracy," the other party leader, Gramoz Pashko, said. "The Communists who sucked our blood for 16 years are finished. Within two months they will be in pieces."

Ministry segregates sexes

AMMAN (AP) — Jordan's social development minister, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, has segregated male and female employees at his ministry, citing Islamic rules on interaction between the sexes.

"Instead of moving forward, leaving these ideas behind us, we are moving backward," said a woman worker at the ministry, insisting on anonymity.

Education Minister Abdallah Aqayleh, a Brotherhood member, has banned male sports teachers from instructing female students in state schools. Like Mr. Aqayleh's action, this falls under the Islamic tradition forbidding women to appear in front of men, even relatives, unless they are veiled.

Islamist deputies in Parliament have submitted a proposal to ban coeducation in all schools, community colleges and universities in the country. The proposal has not been discussed because the Parliament has recessed for a summer break.

Muslim fundamentalists vowed during the 1989 election campaign to introduce strict Islamic laws, ban alcohol and "indecent" television programmes, and close down night clubs in this predominantly Muslim state.

But so far, they have only succeeded in banning alcohol aboard flights on the national airline to Arab and Islamic countries.

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Anti-social development

THE DEVIL, made of unseen material, has always been seen as the supreme spirit of evil and a leader of all apostate angels. Being deprived of a certain abode, he chooses the most weird and loathsome of places in which to play his tricks and practise his wickedness. In fact the devil resides everywhere; not least in the soul of each human being. To lock a man and a woman in a room and suspect the devil will be there is plausible. But if the two are working in an office, providing services to the people, then the devil's presence must be somewhat in question. Thus, the decision by the most honourable Minister of Social Development to segregate sexes at his ministry can only be viewed as a step backward in a country that for decades has been striving to realise equality between the sexes. Segregation, after all, is a form of racism. Moreover, it is an offence against people's basic rights as equals in the workplace as well as in the eyes of the law. The respected minister's argument that the Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him, had ordained segregation is not entirely true. Women during the early days of Islam not only mingled with men and did what men did, they even fought alongside them in battle. The prophet preached modesty and chastity in appearance and in intentions, two qualities that no forced segregation can enforce. What is more dangerous than the issue of segregation is the call by many fundamentalists to bar women from work altogether. That would take Jordan or any other place for that matter back into the dark ages; and we need not look far around us to see how awful the situation of women in so-called conservative societies really is.

There are many ways to keep the devil out. But segregation alone is certainly not one of them. If anything, evil can find more fertile ground in wretchedness, ignorance and deprivation.

In fact, it can be argued that socially at least, more open societies have done better than closed ones. A relatively devil-free, healthy life does not base itself on old myths. It only develops in societies of equality, authenticity and highly intellectual life. Besides, wrong are those who claim higher moral authority for themselves and not others, regardless of who they are.

Were those men and women at the ministry asked if they wanted to mingle or separate? Have we not, at this late hour, discovered that authoritarianism only brings disaster? And that the road to salvation does not lie in restricting personal freedoms and human rights?

The government of Mr. Mudar Badran has a duty to upgrade the performance of ministers or officials who are not contributing to improving the quality of life in the Kingdom.

It has a greater responsibility still to rein in those who are starting a slide. The last thing our social development needs is someone who is unaware that segregation is wrong, counterproductive and an obstacle to our progress.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I daily newspaper Monday launched a bitter attack on the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) for their attitude towards the Arab World in general and Jordan and the PLO in particular. These countries' decision to suspend aid to Jordan and the PLO is a true expression of their hostile attitude towards the other Arab and Muslims and towards democracy and Arab unity, said the paper. Indeed this attitude falls in line with these Arab countries' expression of admiration for Israel which is also hostile to the Arabs and Muslims, the paper continued. The GCC countries had imagined that the little aid which they used to offer Jordan and the Palestinians was something that they doled on to the two parties as an act of charity; and they seem to forget that the financial assistance came in implementation of Arab League summit resolutions which called for bolstering the Jordanian-Palestinian stand in the face of Israel's expansionist aims in other Arab countries and the oil wealth of the Arab World. We believe that the GCC decision is indeed an American decision, aimed at exercising pressure on the Jordanians and Palestinians to succumb to the will of the Zionists because the GCC decision came close to the heels of a U.S. Senate decision to suspend all forms of assistance to Jordan, the paper added. The GCC countries' decision did not cause us any pain, because we consider these countries' attitude as pathetic, now that they are exposed as enemies of Arabs and Muslims and friends of the Zionist enemy and its allies. The paper said that one should not be surprised now of the GCC countries' expressed readiness to finance the construction of Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian land.

When we heard that the Arab League is holding a meeting in Cairo attended by all Arab countries last Saturday, we were filled with renewed hope that after all the Arab leaderships would mend fences and embark on meaningful work towards genuine reconciliation, said Sawt Al Shaah daily Monday. Indeed, such meeting opened the door for all these Arab countries to take stock, and revise their position in a bid to end differences and unify ranks to safeguard the higher Arab national interests, the paper continued. But soon the meeting broke up without any result, driving Arab masses towards feelings of further frustration and despair, the paper added. The Arab delegates did not even discuss the items on the Arab League council's agenda and did not care to turn their attention to the serious and devastating consequences of the Gulf war so that they would embark on reconstruction, the paper noted. The Arab masses had hoped that the Arab League countries would stand firm in the face of the U.S.-Zionist conspiracy and would announce their determination to back Iraq's endeavours to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity, but nothing of this kind happened, the paper said. It said despite the failure of the meeting to achieve any result, the Arab masses can still hope that the potential of the Arab Nation is far from being lost, and there will come a day when the Arabs will place their national interests above all other considerations.

Iraq crushes rebellion with consent of antagonists

By Alistair Lyon
Reuter

DAMASCUS — President Saddam Hussein seems to have all but crushed Kurdish and Shiite uprisings which blossomed after Iraq's Gulf war defeat.

Lack of outside help appears to have brought their collapse.

The United States and its partners in the coalition which drove the Iraqi army from Kuwait on Feb. 28 gave no substantial aid to Iraqi dissidents seeking to overthrow 22 years of Baathist rule.

A month after the uprising was sparked by anti-Saddam riots in the southern city of Basra, reports from Iraq on Monday signalled the virtual end of the most serious challenge to Saddam's rule since his party came to power in 1968.

"The Americans haven't got an alternative to Saddam," a Gulf diplomat in the Syrian capital said. "The Kurds cannot rule all of Iraq and the Saudis and Gulf states don't want the Shites in power. So it's better for all sides to drain each other's strength in fighting."

Shiite Muslims captured a belt of southern cities, stretching from the Gulf port of Basra to the holy shrines of Najaf and Karbala, following the chaotic Iraqi retreat from Kuwait.

Soon afterwards, Kurdish Peshmerga guerrillas seized a big swathe of the mountainous bear-

land in northern Iraq from weakened and demoralised government troops.

Iraq, neutral in the Gulf war, was used as a conduit for smuggled small arms to the Shites. It let Shiite Iraqi exiles in Iran go home to fight the Iraqi army but kept out of the fighting.

The Iraqi rebels appear to have received little help from anyone else.

Initially the Iraqi leadership concentrated on quelling the Shites, allowing the Kurds a free band to capture Zakho, Sulaimaniya, Irbil and the major oil centre of Kirkuk. At one point rebel forces even threatened Mosul, Iraq's third biggest city.

But after crushing the southern rebellion, the army last week turned to the Kurds.

The troops counter-attacked hard with tanks, helicopter gunships, artillery and, by rebel accounts, planes against lightly armed and ill-coordinated Kurds.

By the weekend, Baghdad had announced the recapture of Kirkuk, Irbil and Dohuk, and on Monday a Damascus spokesman for the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) acknowledged that rebels had made a "tactical withdrawal" from the three cities.

Later in the day Baghdad announced the capture of the strategic border town of Zakho and the nearby border crossing of Halabja, effectively cutting off the Kurds main escape route to Turkey.

Washington's hands-off policy

The rebels say Iraqi shelling has inflicted untold civilian casualties and accuse the Iraqi troops of genocide.

Foreign correspondents with the rebels say many thousands of Kurds have fled the fighting into the mountains and towards Turkey and Iran.

Kurds complained to Western correspondents that U.S. President George Bush had urged Iraqis to rise against Saddam but then did nothing to help them when he counter-attacked, the BBC's Jim Muir reported from north Iraq.

Bush set his face against backing his exhortation with practical assistance to the rebel cause.

His decision to bail the 100-hour allied ground offensive which drove Iraq's forces from Kuwait allowed Iraqi Republican Guard units to flee north with scores of tanks and artillery pieces later used to crush internal dissent.

The United States has shot down two Iraqi planes flying in violation of a provisional Feb. 28 Gulf ceasefire, but has not prevented the Iraqis from deploying helicopters against rebels.

Bush wants to avoid being accused of interfering in Iraq's internal affairs," said a Western diplomat in Damascus. "The Europeans may have sympathy for the Kurds but only the Americans could help them with missiles or whatever they need."

Washington's hands-off policy

also stems from concern about the impact of any break-up of Iraq on Middle East stability.

Iraq's Arab neighbours fear the emergence of any radical fundamentalist Shiite state in southern Iraq which would strengthen the influence of Iran in the Gulf and Iran.

Turkey, fighting Kurdish guerrillas who want independence for an estimated 10 million Turkish Kurds, is in touch with Iraqi rebels, who say independence is not on their agenda.

But Ankara, while wanting Saddam's downfall, has vowed to abort any nascent Kurdish state in northern Iraq.

Syria and Iran, which also have Kurdish minorities of their own, have repeatedly stressed support for Iraq's territorial integrity.

Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, who nurtures an old feud with Saddam, says he favours his replacement by a coalition of 17 Kurdish, Shiite, Sunni and other Iraqi opposition parties.

Assad has let dissidents open information offices in his capital, but kept a distance from them. They moved the venue of last month's opposition congress from Damascus to Beirut.

The Gulf diplomat said secular Syria, despite its valued alliance with Iran, would not want Tehran-backed Iraqi Shites to gain undue power on the doorstep of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

"Syria will not let Iran rule Iraq," he said.

Form Islamic trust to share oil riches

By Lawrence Rosen

PRINCETON, New Jersey — Despite the allied victory in the Gulf war, there are many in the Muslim world and in the West who are reluctant to support oil-rich oligarchies whose closely held wealth has made them very unpopular with the poor masses of the Arab World.

The regimes whose countries were defended and liberated must assist in rallying broad Arab support for a new economic order. Placing a substantial portion of their oil reserves in an irrevocable trust benefiting all Muslims would go a long way toward eliminating the antipathy that drew many Muslims to Saddam Hussein.

The model for such a trust is readily available. In Islam, there exists a form of financial trust — known as *waf* or *habus* — set up for pious purposes. Such trusts, which have legal and religious status, were used historically to stop the dissipation of wealth and channel it to beneficial ends, to consolidate the patrimony of a family, tribe or confederation and to immu-

nize property from tyrants.

Under Islamic law, an independent authority manages property held in a religious trust. In this case, a panel consisting of the keepers of the Islamic holy places, religious representatives from the region and scholars from Islamic countries with workers in the region could serve as trustees. The board would not be part of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries nor would it make oil policy. It would simply oversee the distribution of funds earned by participating countries.

The advantages of such a trust in the present circumstances are numerous. It would demonstrate to Muslims worldwide that its contributors were serious about their welfare. It would underscore the idea that a portion of the resources of the region belong to all Muslims and help to disperse power in the region, allaying fears of domination by any one individual or country. By supporting the creation of such a trust, the United States would be squarely on the side

of a more equitable distribution of Arab oil wealth through a distinctly Islamic institution.

Furthermore, an Islamic oil trust would offer an alternative to the pre-war concept of Arab unity. It would provide an incentive to stabilise oil prices and reduce the use of oil as a weapon or narrow nationalistic aims while demonstrating that the West's presence in the region helped redistribute resources to all Muslims.

Such a trust could be a de-politicised vehicle for assisting in the rapprochement of the Gulf states with the Palestinians and Jordan. It would assist oil workers displaced by the crisis, ease tensions between European countries, their Arab "guest workers" and former colonies, and reassure Americans that they have not been fighting to reinstate wealthy autocrats. Such a trust might even help prevent future war in the region.

The trust should have as its main corpus a part of the oil reserves of Kuwait, including the oil in the Rumaila oilfield that Iraq has claimed. Before Aug. 2, less than 1 per cent of

Kuwait's daily production was taken from Rumaila. Commitment of this reserve to the trust would undercut some of Iraq's appeal to those hostile to the oil sheikhs.

The Saudis should also place a significant part of their oilfields in the trust as a sign of their good intentions. It might also be announced that any further belligerence by Iraq or any attempt by Iraq to dismantle Iraq would result in the oilfields of southern Iraq being placed in the trust.

The Arabic term for a pious trust comes from a root that means "to take one's stand or resist." Joint military action is not the only way to take a stand. If Americans and Muslims are to forge a new alliance and achieve economic justice in the post-war period, they should move expeditiously to form an Islamic oil trust.

The writer is chairman of the anthropology department at Princeton University and adjunct professor of law at Columbia University. He contributed this comment to The New York Times.

Face to face with President Bush

Mired from hips to lips in the Middle East

Hello. My name is Abdulla Hasanat. I am a Jordanian journalist. A couple of nights ago, I thought up a story for April fool's day. But the newspaper would not publish for me, contending that it might get picked up by an idiotic wire news agency back or something, and might thus elicit a denial from the White House. Last night, a compromise was struck: the newspaper would carry my story but only after this note was pasted right above it.

In an interview with Mr. George Bush, the U.S. president sounded reconciliatory when he said he thought Jordanian journalists "were sensible, professional and clean."

In the exclusive interview, the American president dismissed earlier remarks about Jordanian journalists, attributed to him in a March 8 interview with Arab journalists, as "taken out of context."

"I certainly wouldn't accuse journalists, any journalists of acting as magicians and being corrupt," the president said. "I know what it takes to make a good story, lots of hassle and ass-kissing — pardon me." Mr. Bush said at his oval office in the White House.

He revealed that he "honestly understood" all the attacks made against him by Jordanian columnists and writers, but especially by Al Ra'i's Badr Abdul Haq. "I can understand the guy. Folks like him express profound feelings and sentiments; never mind the rhetoric," the president said.

Asked what he thought of Abdul Haq's call for boycotting American goods and the overwhelming support it received in Jordan, the president paused for a second and said: "Well, thank God it was only limited to Jordan. Otherwise (the boycott) would have

affected our grain exports. That is why we opted for a quick war; otherwise such campaigns would adversely have affected our economy."

Asked to comment on perceptions that prevailed in Jordan during the crisis, especially those related to the Iraqi military and the outcome of the war, Mr. Bush said that even though he could not read Arabic, he was fascinated by the headlines. "I seldom see 8-column headlines," he said, "and especially in so much red. It must have reflected the hot mood of the public." But the president did not blame the Jordanian writers and columnists for what he thought was "exaggeration." "Most of the stuff about Iraq's hidden power originated at this (U.S.) end," the president admitted.

We leaked it to our media, and your press did the same and the blowing up of course."

Asked about cartoons, the president said he particularly liked Al Dustour Jalal Rifai's portrayal of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. "Kind of Rambo, Rambo a la Arab, you might say," said the president.

However, Mr. Bush did not like all the blood and skulls in the cartoons. "Come on guys, be more subtle," he urged. "You don't have to make all these pools of blood to make a wink."

Asked if he wanted to address any message to Arab journalists or Arabs in general, the president hesitated, but

pointed out: "Oh, not really. Last time I did something like this, I was misquoted and taken out of context." In a lengthy answer to a question, the president recalled the history of the Gulf crisis, the American resolve to confront the "aggressor" and the coalition's remarkable success in the war.

"You Arabs must understand that we want nothing from you. Someone said the West wants your oil, this is true. But you need to sell the 'God damn thing' if not, we'll come and get it. So my message is get this into your mind. Read my lips and hips. Give us the oil and we'll give you the peace."

Asked if he wanted to add anything to his message, the president said: "I have come to the Hashemite Kingdom without knowledge or limitation, I am aware that U.S. President George Bush's most recently cited expressions include an unfortunate double entendre: people here feel they should have some concern because George Bush is 'still calling the shots, still in power.' They may not know how to say this to him, but Arabs are conscious that he is not their president."

As Mr. Bush is head of my state, so he has sworn to uphold and defend the constitution, even though this includes a Bill of Rights.

Mary H. Hall,
Y.W.C.A. Hostel
P. O. Box 5014
Amman.

No brokerage in the Middle East regional security

By Nurver Nure

The writer is Turkey's ambassador to the U.K. The article is reprinted from The Independent

THE firm stand Turkey took during the Gulf crisis and the full support she gave to the U.N. coalition forces are already events of the past. We are all thankful that the war is over. However, building a lasting peace is often more taxing than winning a war. This is the challenge that lies ahead.

The immediate task is to ensure the territorial integrity of Iraq. This is essential for the region's future stability. Turkey's own position on the inviolability of Iraq's territory is unequivocal. The Turkish government is pleased to note that both Iran and Syria are also committed to maintaining Iraq's territorial integrity.

In the past, the Middle East has confounded the hopes of those who believed that merely by winning battles they could establish a lasting peace. The repercussions go far beyond attempting to introduce or even impose blueprints for a new security order in the region. The security arrangements that maintained international community is determined to help the region in addressing its problems. This matter could be advanced within the Islamic Conference Organisation after formulation of initial strategy by a special working party. Such measures modelled on the CSCE, would complement each other.

In the political arena, the wave of democracy that only very recently swept across Eastern Europe will inevitably extend to the Middle East. Once the democratic process gains ground in the region, ensuring greater mass participation in government, political polarisation caused by the whims of individual rulers will be replaced by the natural instinct of people to benefit from peaceful intraregional economic, political and social-cultural cooperation.

Even before the Gulf war, Turkey had taken initiatives in this context that are worth recalling. First, at the Islamic Conference in Amman in 1988, it was Turkey that suggested the establishment of a system of confidence- and security-building measures covering the entire Islamic world. A restricted group of

Israel

(Continued from page 1)

opposition Labour Party, agreed. "These are measures which under certain circumstances are effective but the problem is how to deal with the roots of this manner (but) to rely only on police or military methods misses the target."

Palestinian leaders said the measures were Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's response to a call by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker last month for new thinking.

"Israel is giving a message to Baker and the Europeans saying that a land-for-peace deal is unacceptable," Palestinian academic Saeb Erekat said.

The respected Haaretz newspaper said Monday the authorities were considering keeping in place a temporary ban on private Palestinian vehicles from entering Israel introduced during the Gulf crisis. Israel Television said expulsions would include Palestinians in Arab Jerusalem, who have generally been treated more leniently in the past.

There would be stricter scrutiny of Palestinians seeking to work in Israel, those granted permits would have to travel by public transport and there would be stiffer penalties for Israelis employing unregistered Palestinians, the reports said.

Political sources said that although expulsion and house demolition had been used widely in the past, their still broader implementation was aimed at calming an Israeli public alarmed by the killing of seven Israelis in the past five weeks, five of them stabbed to death on the streets of Jerusalem.

Israel has expelled 62 Palestinians since the start of the 39-month-old uprising. Last week it ordered four more banished.

Left-wing Israelis denounced the decisions as too harsh. Palestinian leaders called it collective punishment and warned thousands of Arabs who depend on work in Israel could be left unemployed.

Meanwhile, in the occupied West Bank, a 17-year-old Palestinian died during a clash with soldiers.

Reports said Ayad Abdul Razi from the Tulkarm refugee camp died after he was shot in the neck, abdomen and back. The army command said the youth was shot in the shoulder and died after he fell off a high wall while fleeing the army patrol.

Abdul Razi's death brought to 814 the number of Palestinians who have died in clashes with Israeli soldiers and civilians since the start of the uprising.

Kuwaitis

(Continued from page 1)

Muslims, pan-Arab nationalists, former deputies, professors and members of influential trading families.

It called for full implementation of the 1962 constitution, the appointment of competent figures to government posts and not just members of the Al Sabah family, freedom of speech and press and judicial independence.

The list of demands demonstrates the opposition's growing confidence after the Gulf war. Opposition activists said they decided to direct their demands to the emir after receiving a disappointing response in several meetings with the crown prince.

The constitution confirms the Sabahs as the emirate's rightful hereditary rulers but also stipulates the formation of a powerful parliament.

The Sabah-dominated government, formed in June and headed by Sheikh Saad, resigned about three weeks after the end of the Gulf war on Feb. 28. It faced growing popular dissatisfaction with its inability quickly to restore basic services in the shattered country.

Several opposition groups told Reuters that during talks with the crown prince they had refused offers to join a new cabinet unless a date for elections was set. Some resistance groups have also refused to disband until elections are called.

The document said the cabinet should include "all popular powers with all their political and social factions... ministers should serve and give, not rule and exploit."

The opposition says ministers have in the past used their power for personal gains and fear they would be granted the local partnership in multibillion dollar post-war reconstruction contracts.

According to the law, foreign companies must have local partners with at least a 51 per cent share. During a meeting with Sheikh Saad last week, opposition figures called for a representative committee to be formed to review reconstruction contracts.

Some 32 former deputies and

their supporters staged rallies in December 1989 and January 1990 demanding the return of parliament but, after a dialogue with the crown prince, the emir called elections for an interim national council.

The pro-democracy movement boycotted elections held in June 1990 for a national assembly and said the council was unconstitutional and toothless.

Opposition leaders say their demands will gain further weight with the eventual return home of some 400,000 Kuwaitis, who fled after the Aug. 2 Iraqi invasion.

Mubarak

(Continued from page 1)

bias, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

"The mission is not finished yet. We have not reached peace," Mr. Mubarak said in response to a question about the foreign troops. But he said: "As soon as the problems end, all of us will demand the withdrawal of foreign troops."

Nevertheless, Mr. Mubarak said the projected Arab security force in the Gulf "may need some assistance, help from other foreign countries. I think we'll ask them."

Asked which countries, he said: "I mean the United States and other countries in the coalition."

On the wider Middle East conflict, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who toured the region after the Gulf war, is encouraging steps to build confidence between Arabs and Israelis and bring them into peace talks.

The New York Times reported Thursday that Mr. Baker was probing the possibility of holding regional peace talks with the United States and the Soviet Union acting as hosts.

Syria, which lost its Golan Heights to Israel during the 1967 war, has also insisted on an international conference to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

It hopes such a gathering, rejected by Israel, will make the Jewish state give back all Arab lands it occupied in 1967.

Asked if he would agree to a meeting attended only by front-line states, Israel, the United States and possibly the Soviet Union, Mr. Mubarak said he would not.

"No, if all the five permanent Security Council members, front-line countries like Egypt, Syria, Israel, Palestinians, Jordanians and Lebanon meet, I think it may work."

He made no mention of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) which annoyed Egypt by its support for Iraq during the Gulf crisis. He said in an interview last week Egypt would deal with the PLO, but he did not fully trust its leader, Yasser Arafat.

"Reconciliation between Arab countries will take time," Mr. Mubarak told reporters.

Mr. Assad, Egypt's staunch Arab ally during the crisis, agreed.

After Mr. Assad's return to Damascus, his spokesman Jubran Kourch told Reuters the president's talks with Mr. Mubarak had been "successful, constructive and harmonious."

The two leaders agreed on all points they discussed, he said, but gave no details.

Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharfa left Cairo for Jeddah with a letter from Mr. Assad to King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, official sources said. They did not disclose its contents.

Mujahedeen

(Continued from page 1)

Khomeini regime finally broke its silence. At noon today, the regime's radio confessed to an extensive clash between its Pasdaran and forces of the National Liberation Army of Iran," the Mujahedeen statement said.

"Beginning in the early hours of the morning, thousands of Khomeini's Pasdaran crossed the Iranian border in the Qasr-e-Shirin region," it said. Armed with light and heavy weaponry, such as tanks and armoured personnel carriers, they attacked the Iranian resistance's bases in the border region of Khanqah and Jaulia."

"The counter-attack by NLA units during the first hours of the offensive left more than 1,000 guards dead, most of whose bodies are still lying in the border regions within Iraq," according to the statement.

"Based on the evidence of the large number of Pasdaran corpses in Iraqi territory who had guards corps ID cards, the Mujahedeen organisation of Iran calls upon all international assemblies, in particular the United Nations, to strongly condemn the Khomeini regime's extensive military interference in Iraqi territory in order to suppress the Iranian resistance," the statement said.

"We also insistently demand that an investigative delegation be dispatched to the border region of Qasr-e-Shirin/Khanqah so that it can witness first-hand the Khomeini regime's extensive military deployment into Iraqi territory in order to surround and suppress the Iranian resistance and set up an 'Islamic regime' in Iraq," it said.

"According to information, at 3:30 p.m. Monday, after 14 hours of battle with the Khomeini regime's Pasdaran, combatants of the National Liberation Army (NLA) of Iran captured strategic height number 323, in the Moravid Heights northeast of Jahlia, another Mujahedeen state-

"The Pasdaran had previously occupied the height to stage an assault on NLA units. The height is littered with the bodies of hundreds of Pasdaran," it said.

"The fighting is continuing on other fronts," it said.

PLO

(Continued from page 1)

Hassan said.

"We are not living under the illusion that there is a solution coming from the United States. What we live on is the fact that we must continue the struggle and the intifada."

Mr. Hassan, a moderate former close to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, accused Western nations of trying to deceive the PLO during the Gulf crisis with false promises of action to help Palestinians.

"We had delegations coming from Europe, Britain and France, all swearing that the age of international legitimacy had begun and that as soon as the Gulf war was over, they would immediately set about enforcing Palestinian rights," he said.

"But the determination we saw in the case of Iraq, we scarcely see a trace of its in the way they are dealing (with the Palestinian issue)."

Jordan Times

(Continued from page 1)

It called for full implementation of the 1962 constitution, the appointment of competent figures to government posts and not just members of the Al Sabah family, freedom of speech and press and judicial independence.

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Some 32 former deputies and

Sense of cynicism prevails in occupied territories

In the Palestinian heartland, there are indications that new political ideas may be emerging. Jon Immanuel of the Israeli English language newspaper *The Jerusalem Post*, filed this report on March 29.

"WELCOME TO THE Holy Land," a Balata grocer shouted, as he hawked his falafel. Then he roared with laughter. Refugees, being at the bottom of the social scale, usually wear their suffering on their sleeve, but they have recently developed a sense of irony absent before the Gulf war.

Visitors who came to Balata, Askar and the other hardcore centre of Palestinian radicalism around Nablus, in the first month of the Gulf crisis would have been confronted by raised fists, marches, surfeits and stony glances. While almost the entire Balata workforce of 4,000 to 5,000 worked in Israel before the war, only about 300 have permits to work in Israel now, partly because most of them worked in the restricted Tel Aviv area. Mohammad Abdulla, who sells chicken feed to farmers, one of the most basic commodities in the area for Palestinian farmers, says his sales are below 50 per cent last year's 60 a day.

White almost the entire Balata



Palestinian refugee camps in the occupied territories are witnessing more poverty and despair (photo by Joel Fishman)

with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, according to Bassem Eid, the B'tselem human rights organisation field worker.

The people they mention as their true representatives are in administrative detention. Many but not all are of refugee origin. Some are supporters of Navef Hawatmeh, the leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine; almost none are known to the Israeli public.

Has there been some sort of catharsis? The sight of Scud missiles sailing over Mount Gerizim to Tel Aviv satisfied a deep-seated resentment in most Palestinians. They prefer to exaggerate, rather than play down, a sentiment that most Israelis consider morally depraved. Not do they underplay their support for Saddam Hussein.

Israelis could not sympathise with Palestinians who said the cheerleaders wanted Israelis to feel something of the Palestinian experience, "the sense of belittlement, the fear of being outdoors after dark, enforced unemployment, the prospect of sudden home demolition, schon closures," as Dr. Mamoud Acker, now in solitary confinement himself, put it.

"Yes, we cheered when the missiles came over. You could hear the cheering for miles around," one enthusiastic young man in Askar (population 9,000) said this week. In the specific context of the Nablus area he was probably more accurate than Shmuel Goren, the former government coordinator in the territories, who said reports of cheering were "exaggerated."

In one house shared by three brothers, it is possible to trace the gradual "evolution" in political consciousness that has developed over the past decade. Hussein, the oldest, is about 35. He is dispirited because he has lost his job at the textile plant at which he worked for 13 years in Tel Aviv. His employer could not take him back because Hussein was one of two Palestinian employees and the new regulations said only groups of 10 employees could work in the Tel Aviv area.

The second brother, Abed, looking more composed and sure of himself, has not had time to work because he has served five terms in administrative detention. Administrative detention is considered "nothing special" by Palestinian refugees.

The youngest brother, Ghassan, 22, probably the most self-confident of the three, is serving 14 years in Jinedz prison for throwing a firebomb at a military patrol in 1986.

The economic situation is depressing. In Askar, the owner of the Al Nadi children's dress shop has not sold anything in three months.

This sentiments found greater expression after the decision by the 10 "personalities" to meet

led by Hussein would have been able to suggest to Baker. For instance, Jrea's not only calls for dissolving the PNC and holding new elections, but demands immediate parity of representation between Palestinians here and abroad. Yet, the PLO maintains that the majority of Palestinians live abroad. He is even ambiguous about the role of the PLO.

This brilliantly crafted piece of political rhetoric manages to restore traditional Palestinian prejudices while redirecting them towards a new course. Although it attacks the U.S. by name, using all the old formulas, it does so to show up the PLO's foolishness. "Shall we allow the issues to run rampant and stand with our arms folded as time works against our welfare, and watch the events upon which we have no effect except to scream, condemn and curse this and that? ... Shall we be satisfied with our declaration of independence and the reaffirmation that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of our people, when the facts are rapidly changing on the ground?"

It talks about Iraq's "military" defeat but clearly implies that Iraq suffered a political defeat which stands to ruin the Palestinians because it has "tipped the balance of power in the region to win them time," said Hussein. "I would love to see elections." He does not claim to be a true representative of the people. He admitted that he was not close to the refugee population, because "If I try to get to the refugee camps, I am prevented by the military from doing so."

With sentiments like these, mirroring the ill-feeling of the "havens" towards the wealthy Kuwaitis, refugees have difficulty acknowledging the leadership of the Palestinians from the well-known families who have been largely responsible for distributing PLO funds.

This sentiments found greater expression after the decision by the 10 "personalities" to meet

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Graf beats Seles in hardcourt final

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Steffi Graf took a step toward regaining the top women's tennis ranking with a 6-4, 6-3 victory over top-ranked Monica Seles to claim the U.S. Women's Hardcourt Championship title for the third time.

It was Graf's first tournament victory since November's Virginia Slims of New England and her first over Seles since 1989.

Graf, ranked no. 2 in the world, had last met Seles in the 1990 French Open finals, which Seles won 7-6, 6-4. Graf improved her career lead over Seles to 4-2.

Seles, 17, ascended to the no. 1 world ranking on March 11 after Graf's record reign of 186 weeks. Because the U.S. Women's Hardcourt Championship is only a 32-player draw, Graf will not overtake Seles in the computer rankings.

But Graf, 21, acknowledged that she hoped her victory Sunday would be a turning point.

"I think I'm on the right way now," a smiling Graf said. "I made slowly, failing to step into her shots and netting many of them on the way to losing two service games and falling behind 4-1 in the first set. But she stormed back in the sixth game to break Seles' service at love."

Two games later, Graf broke Seles again to even the match at 4-4 and won the first set with a third service break. The set ended with a lob by Graf that landed on the baseline.

Both players started the second set by holding their serve, but Graf got a crucial service break to take a 4-2 lead. Seles had missed a break-point opportunity at 2-2 when Graf hit a volley putaway at the net. Seles had another break opportunity in the seventh game, but a Graf service ace at deuce followed by a down-the-line winner gave her a 5-2 lead.

"I put the second set back on serve in the ninth game, but a Graf volley, a Seles shot into the net and a Graf cross-court winner ended the match.

"She was hitting the ball well, and I had to keep hitting great

serves back, but that's hard to do constantly," Seles said. "She pulled out a lot of points on her serve."

Graf narrowed Seles' lead in the computer ranking from 23 points to 16 in a system that averages out performances over the past year.

But Graf said the ranking matters less than the return of her confidence that had waned in the last few months.

"The way I played the last few matches makes me feel better, and I look forward to the next few matches," Graf said.

Graf won the U.S. Women's Hardcourt title twice after the tournament was revived in 1988, but did not enter last year because of a thumb injury. Seles was the defending champion.

The victory earned Graf \$45,000.

Fernandez, Sukova win doubles title

In Tarpon Springs, Florida, Gigi Fernandez and Helena Sukova overcame a 5-1 third-set deficit Sunday to win the \$200,000 Light N' Lively doubles title.

The pair won 6-4, 4-6, 7-6 (7-3)

over Natalia Zvereva and Larisa Savchenko of the Soviet Union.

It was the second day in a row the top-seeded team rallied to win, in the semifinals, Fernandez and Sukova charged back from 5-0 in the opening set to defeat Kathy Jordan and Liz Smylie, 4-6, 6-4, 6-1.

"If you can comeback from 5-0 then you can definitely come back from 5-1," Fernandez said. "We thought about trying to win one point at a time and then the next thing we knew we had won a few games."

Sukova of Czechoslovakia and Fernandez of Puerto Rico split the \$75,000 winner's check. Zvereva and Savchenko shared \$35,000.

Savchenko and Zvereva, seeded second, served for the match twice, at 5-2 and 5-4. Each time they were broken, and the pressure to close out the match heightened. The pair bungled



routine volleys that kept the comeback of Fernandez and Sukova alive.

Navratilova prepares for clay event

Meanwhile Martina Navratilova has been on Hilton Head Island in South Carolina for a week, building a foundation for what she hopes will be a fifth victory in the Family Circle Magazine Cup Tournament.

"It's difficult to practice in Aspen in the altitude because you can't keep the ball in play very well in the altitude, even though there are indoor clay courts," she said. "And I need to set outdoors. I've only played one tournament outdoors since the U.S. Open."

Navratilova is the favourite for the tournament. She is the highest ranked player in the field at no. 3 in the world.

Now, if she just can remember to stay aggressive on the green

clay courts at the Sea Pines Racquet Club this week.

"This surface tends to make me more passive than you can be on a normal court. But I tend to take a step too far."

Towards that end, Navratilova left the cold of Colorado for the warmth of Hilton Head Island.

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Finland's Kankkunen wins Safari Rally

NAIROBI (R) — Former world champion Juhu Kankkunen of Finland, driving a Lancia Integrale, won the six-day, 4,500 kilometre Safari Rally Monday.

His second victory in the Kenyan event was assured after he took the lead early Sunday.

Sweden's Mikael Ericsson, driving a Toyota Celica, was second 26 minutes behind and Joerg Recalde of Argentina, in a Lancia, was third.

Kankkunen, winner of the Safari Rally in 1985 and runner up last year, notched up an accumulated penalty time of two hours, seven minutes and 10 seconds, while Ericsson had a time of 2:33:34 and Recalde's time was 2:36:13.

Kankkunen had snatched the lead in the race, considered one of the toughest on the rallying

circuit, early Sunday when world champion Carlos Sainz of Spain retired with engine trouble after leading since the start last Wednesday.

Kankkunen had a lead of 21 minutes over Ericsson when the race set off before dawn Monday to wind round the foothills of Mount Kenya and south to Nairobi.

Ericsson, who was third in the world championship standings, led the race from the first leg, although with a margin of only a few minutes over his rivals.

But early on in Sunday's leg, Sainz, driving a Toyota, was forced out with engine trouble.

The victory took him to within two points of Sainz in the world championship standings.

"Now I am in a position to make an assault on the title," he said.

Kankkunen had moved up to chase Sainz from second position Friday as the race moved into tougher terrain and much-fancied Bjorn Waldegaard of Sweden slipped back with engine trouble to his Toyota.

Kankkunen, world champion in 1986 and 1987, said: "The Safari is still the longest and most difficult rallye route for the world championship and it's very exciting to win it."

The victory took him to within two points of Sainz in the world championship standings.

"Now I am in a position to make an assault on the title," he said.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Real Madrid in pain after another home defeat

By Reuters

"SOMEBODY call an ambulance," wailed a headline after Real Madrid's 1-0 home defeat by mediocre Real Burgos left the Spanish champions facing the prospect of recording their worst ever season.

They are just two defeats short of their 1973-74 record of 13 losses and one home defeat short of the record five in 1984-85.

Even worse, Real are in danger of failing to qualify for Europe for only the second time in the club's history.

"Frankly, I don't think reaching the UEFA Cup is going to be easy," said striker Emilio Butragueno after Sunday's spineless performance knocked them back to seventh place in the table.

A UEFA place would be Real's only consolation in an otherwise disastrous season which has seen the distinguished club tumble out of the European Cup and Spanish Cup.

"Now all our rivals come here thinking they have a chance," said Butragueno. The magic of Santiago Bernabeu seems to have worn off as Burgos snatched their first win in Real's stadium — a feat Real Sociedad achieved four weeks ago.

It was a depressing debut for Radomir Antic, the Yugoslav coach who replaced Alfredo di Stefano.

"I can see everybody is pretty demoralised," he said. "I have got a lot of work to do."

Antic was more confident than Butragueno about the team's UEFA chances. "There are 20 points left to play for, so I think we have still got a chance to qualify," he said.

Burgos coach Jose Manuel Diaz summed up Real's problems: "They are overcome by stage fright."

Atletico Madrid can only hope leaders Barcelona suffer similarly from stage fright. The two sides drew 1-1 Saturday, leaving Atletico still four points of the front runners.

The climax to the Italian League season has become overshadowed by Diego Maradona's positive dope test for cocaine, but that will not unduly worry

double-chasing Sampdoria.

On Wednesday league leaders Sampdoria, who have never won the championship, play a shell-shocked Napoli in the second leg of their Italian Cup semifinal.

The Genoa side trail by a goal from the first leg in Naples. But they will be favourites to qualify for the final in the absence of Maradona, who is expected to receive a temporary suspension Tuesday ahead of the Italian Soccer Federation's disciplinary board meeting next weekend.

Sampdoria emerged satisfied from Saturday's disappointing goalless draw against city neighbours Genoa, chiefly because closest rivals Internazionale also drew 1-1 at Napoli.

Sampdoria coach Vujadin Boskov said his side should have taken advantage of their numerical superiority when Genoa's Brazilian left back Branco was sent off early in the second half.

"We were too nervous," he said. "But things are okay as they are. Inter are still three points behind us."

Inter coach Giovanni Trapattoni was frustrated by the failure of his side to hold on to their 1-0 lead after a virtuous 72nd minute goal from German Lothar Matthaeus.

"The side didn't risk everything and that was precisely what it should have done," he said.

AC Milan's victory over Torino, following their local derby win against Inter last week, kept them in with an outside chance of the title, although their best hope for the trophy this season is in the Italian Cup.

Two weeks after they were knocked out of the European Cup by Marseille, Milan face Roma in the away leg of their semifinal with renewed confidence.

"Now we are much better, more determined and more practical," said coach Arrigo Sacchi. The first leg ended in a goalless draw.

Roma came back from two goals down to win 3-2 at Bologna Saturday, leaving coach Ottavio Bianchi bemused.

"We're basically a bit mad as a football team," he said.

America beats Nacional of Medellin in Copa Libertadores

MIAMI (R) — Antonio de Avila scored in the 37th minute to give America of Cali a 1-0 win over Nacional of Medellin Sunday in the first Copa Libertadores soccer match ever played outside of South America.

The victory lengthened America's lead in Group V of the South American Club Championships to three points as the Colombian national champions have earned seven points from four games.

soccer match ever played outside of South America.

Nacional and Tachira of Venezuela are tied for second with four points each for four games.

The America-Nacional match, which drew a crowd of 16,720, was the first of seven that will play in Miami during the next three weeks because of a FIFA ban against Colombia boasting international tournament matches because of fan violence and death threats to a referee in that country.

De Avila's goal was a gift for America, coming after a gamble by Nacional goalkeeper Rene Higuita backfired.

The flashy Colombian keeper raced out of the penalty area to collect a loose ball but bad difficulties controlling it.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY APRIL 2, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You want to get along better with others but there is some confidential secret support that they are expecting to give them before they will respond as you would like them to.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) An influential man is willing to give you the boost towards that which fascinates you so much and that requires a considerable amount of action.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You are able to contact that specialist in a field that interests you and get him to release some information that can help you greatly.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) This is your day to make sure you are the one who does get in touch with good friends in let them know how fond you are of them.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) There are a number of fascinating situations in the outside world that you can handle with effective intelligence so do so.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) This is the time for you to make sure you get off to some new place and make acquaintances of those very different from you but who is very expert.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) This is that moment to be sure to get into new systems of all kinds whereby you can impress any and all contacts with your impressive abilities.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Partners in all walks of life see

your best qualities now and will give you the cooperation you want in making the decisions where you are going.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You have all kinds of projects to get done now so don't waste any more time but get at those duties and you find you do them well.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You are able to find those attractive pleasures and persons that can take you out of the rut of projects and you can have a good time.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You now find that practically everyone is willing to help you get ahead at some basic obligation through so new method is most interesting.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 in February 19) This is the moment when you are able to find the right companion to assist you with any routine matters that you enjoy doing but need help.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is your time to think in terms of a greater abundance and to spare that you have yet realised so get some new money making ideas.

TODAY'S CHILD: If your child were born today she or he upon maturity will be a good host or hostess par excellence and you would be wise to train this little cherub to expand this ability so that many persons can benefit from this special ability.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) This is that moment to be sure to get into new systems of all kinds whereby you can impress any and all contacts with your impressive abilities.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Partners in all walks

Arab Banking Corporation blames Gulf crisis for loss

BAHRAIN (R) — Arab Banking Corporation (ABC) the biggest international Arab bank, Sunday announced a net 1990 loss of \$91 million which it said was largely due to the Gulf crisis.

President and chief executive Abdullaah Saudi told reporters that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait last August, deepening recession in the industrial world, and the continuing debt problems of less developed countries (LDC), had reversed a promising start to the year.

"I think 1990 was a very difficult year... the first six months were very gratifying since we were able to meet all our goals... then we were faced with this war crisis," he said.

"As a result, instead of going for expansion, we find ourselves adopting policies and measures to protect shareholders' funds as well as to be able to meet all our obligations and commitments," he added.

The bank set aside \$179 million in loan loss provisions in 1990, bringing its total cover against non-performing loans to \$846 million or 7.5 per cent.

ABC transferred its entire 1989

profit of \$132 million to loan loss provisions. A bank statement said the value of its LDC loan portfolio was cut to \$1.16 billion during 1990 from \$1.74 billion the previous year.

Despite the Gulf crisis, Saudi said, ABC's total income for the year rose by 9.7 per cent to a record \$555 million.

Loans also climbed, by 10.3 per cent to \$11.03 billion.

Bal deposits fell by eight per cent to \$16.62 billion, mainly due to a sharp drop in interbank deposits caused by the loss of international confidence in Gulf-based banks. This was partially offset by a jump in customer deposits.

Total assets fell by five per cent to \$20.6 billion.

Operating expenses also rose sharply to \$402 million from \$322 million. Saudi said this was due to the cost of maintaining high levels of liquidity during the crisis and a steep rise in subsidiary expenses when expressed in dollars.

Shareholders' funds rose sharply to \$1.386 billion from \$1.15 billion in 1989 after the bank's 1990 share offering.

ABC, owned mainly by

Kuwait, Abu Dhabi and Libya, became the first Gulf-based bank to offer shares to foreign investors on the open market with a \$350 million issue last June.

Saudi Arabian private investors now hold 6.5 per cent of its shares and international investors 15 per cent.

Part of the money from the new share issue was used to finance a new ABC subsidiary in London which will give the bank a foothold in Europe after European Community markets unify.

Saudi said the subsidiary, ABC International Bank, would open Monday. It has a paid-in capital of \$150 million and authorised capital of £300 million.

Saudi said the Gulf war had delayed the long-term strategy of ABC to increase its links with the Arab World, but it expected to pursue them again once the situation stabilised. ABC had offered to loan Kuwait money for reconstruction but its government had not yet decided whether to accept, he said.

The bank cut 15 jobs in investment banking department in Bahrain and London and another 15 in its German subsidiary.

Curfew cost Palestinians \$5.2 million per day

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — The protracted curfew imposed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip during the Gulf war cost the residents of the occupied regions \$5.2 million per day, according to a study by Palestinian economist Samir Huilelah.

In a report for the Israeli human rights organisation Bezelem, he said that the curfew had completely paralysed the economic life of the territories. Industry, which employs about 30,000 people, had lost contracts and clients and its exports to Jordan and other Arab states had been blocked by the closure of the bridges over the Jordan River.

Agriculture, which employs about 40,000 people, had also suffered serious damage, said Mr. Huilelah.

Exports both to Jordan and Israel had been halted and the quality of produce had fallen because it had been impossible to spray and harvest crops on time.

In addition, the curfew had caused a sharp fall in consumption of agricultural produce in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, leading to surpluses which had to be disposed of at a loss.

Demand for meat was down 80 per cent, poultry consumption fell by 40 per cent and demand for fresh vegetables dropped by 70 per cent, said the report.

One of the biggest costs of the curfew was suffered by the thousands of Palestinians who work in construction and other sectors in Israel, and who lost several weeks' wages through being prevented from travelling to work.

Islamists go into cut-price produce business in Algeria

ALGIERS (R) — Whether from motives of charity or political opportunism, Algeria's Muslim fundamentalists have pulled off a minor miracle where government pressure and union strikes have failed.

Through a network of markets and restaurants, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) has cut the price of fruit, vegetables and meat to the hard-pressed consumer by up to 75 per cent.

A Muslim clergymen goes out to the market gardens with the buyers to persuade the farmers to hold their prices down.

"It's not only the prices that draw the customers," adds Ahmed Maran, president of the FIS social affairs committee. "It's also the atmosphere of generosity and compassion, absent in the other markets."

Local government departments dominated by the FIS, Algeria's main Islamic movement, provide trucks for transport and money from the zakat (alms tax) to pay the young fundamentalist sales assistants.

Muslim prayers on plaques adorn the stalls of fruit and vegetables where bearded salesmen work late into the evening to serve the willing customers.

"We charge three dinars (17 cents) for a kilogramme of lettuce

instead of 12 (65 cents) elsewhere. Meat is 90 dinars (\$3) compared with more than 190 (\$11). It's a miracle that only Islamic morals can bring about," said Mahmoud Zahami, a young Algiers City councillor close to the FIS.

Consumer prices have surged as the country makes the switch from central planning to a market economy. A general strike in protest paralysed state industries for two days last month.

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Muslim prayers on plaques adorn the stalls of fruit and vegetables where bearded salesmen work late

Gorbachev and politburo blast opposition, allege foreign threat

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and his Communist Party colleagues launched a bitter assault on the radical opposition at the weekend, accusing their opponents of seeking power at all costs.

Gorbachev, increasingly resuming the role of party chief as well as state president, told an army meeting his reformist opponents were trying "to destabilise society, to shake, weaken and even destroy our constitutional structures."

After a separate meeting under his chairmanship, the party politburo denounced non-Communist opposition groups as "destructive forces" and accused them of using slander and strike calls to undermine Soviet society.

The politburo also said "certain foreign organisations" were trying to influence public opinion and a Moscow intelligence chief accused Western diplomats, journalists and tourists of working to stir unrest.

The party daily Pravda Monday published the attacks on the opposition along with readers' letters defending Gorbachev, now six years in power, against

his radical critics.

"I really suffer for our president," a Ukrainian war veteran wrote. "He is devoting so much effort to the problems of the country. Those who insult him have forgotten it was he who gave us real freedom."

The assault on the radicals, whom Communists accuse of aiming to restore capitalism, followed a major confrontation Thursday between the opposition, which has yet to unite in one movement, and the Gorbachev administration.

The Kremlin leader ordered a huge display of military and police force in Moscow in an unsuccessful attempt to head off a banned demonstration in support of Boris Yeltsin, his chief rival and leader of the Russian Federation.

The show of opposition strength deterred an attempt by Communists in the Russian parliament to oust him as chairman. But pro-Gorbachev deputies stopped a drive by Yeltsin to become full Russian president.

Gorbachev told the army meeting Saturday the opposition was carrying out anti-democratic ac-



Boris Yeltsin

only to preserve but strengthen our position as the ruling party," he added.

Gorbachev, accused by former liberal allies as well as radicals of turning conservative to realign himself with the party bureaucracy, rejected reformists' calls for an end to Communist organisations within the armed forces.

The politburo statement did not specify which foreign groups were trying to influence events in the Soviet Union. KGB General Gennady Titov, head of Soviet counter-intelligence, said at the weekend Western agents were involved.

Titov told the Rabochaya Tribune newspaper Western interests aimed to preserve a weakened Soviet Union as a source of cheap labour and new charges made earlier this year that foreigners aimed to wreck the economy with vast sums of roubles smuggled abroad.

When Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov first made the charges, Gorbachev told foreign bankers and companies investing in the Soviet Union not to overestimate their significance.

Results show huge support for Georgia independence

MOSCOW (AP) — Georgians almost unanimously favour independence in the strongest rebuff yet to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's efforts to hold the union together, preliminary voting results indicated Monday.

In 38 of the republic's 71 districts, 99.3 per cent of voters in Sunday's referendum favoured breaking away from the USSR, said Valerian Khukhunashvili, a Georgian government spokesman in Moscow.

Nearly 90 per cent of the 3.3 million eligible voters in the fractious southern republic cast ballots, the independent Interfax News Agency quoted Vakhtang Khmaladze, chairman of Georgia's Electoral Commission, as saying.

Because of its near-unanimity and high turnout, the vote dealt an even stronger blow to Gorbachev's campaign to unite the 15 diverse republics in a new union treaty than similar referendums in the three Baltic republics.

In February, 91 per cent of Lithuanian voters endorsed independence, followed in March by 74 per cent of Latvians and 78 per cent of Estonians. Armenia has scheduled a vote for Sept. 21.

The Georgian referendum asked: "Do you agree that the state independence of Georgia should be restored on the basis of

the independence act of May 26, 1918?"

Georgia, a multi-ethnic republic of 5.3 million wedged between the Caucasus Mountains and the Black Sea, proclaimed independence from the Russian Empire near the end of World War I. It was forcibly absorbed into the Soviet Union nearly three years later and incorporated under a 1924 union treaty.

There was no immediate reaction to the preliminary results from the Georgian government or Zviad Gamsakhurdia, the Georgian nationalist leader recently elected president on a programme of independence. He confidently predicted victory Sunday.

Independence-minded Georgia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Armenia — plus Moldavia — refused to take part in Gorbachev's March 17 nationwide referendum on preserving the union.

Nine republics, representing three-quarters of the country's population, approved the referendum by 76 per cent. Gorbachev has used the result to bolster support for his proposed new union treaty.

He says the anti-Kremlin polls are invalid, but he will not try to stop them.

Moscow retreats from Laos

VIENTIANE (R) — The Soviet Union's reduction in its overseas commitments is making itself felt in this charming but penniless corner of South East Asia where Moscow is ending a 15-year role as economic, diplomatic and political crutch to Laos.

On the outskirts of this languid capital stands the unfinished bulk of the new Soviet embassy, begun three years ago when Moscow had big plans for its South East Asian outpost.

For the past year work on what would have been Vientiane's tallest building has been at best desultory.

Soviet and Laotian officials said that since the beginning of this year all but humanitarian aid from Moscow would cease and be replaced by trade based on world prices. Laos would be asked to repay its debts in goods.

"We are not retreating from the region, and we don't want to. We are just trying to find a more suitable way to live here," said Valery Stetinian, counsellor at the Soviet embassy.

The shift brings to an end a shotgun marriage forged during the early days of the cold war when Pathet Lao guerrillas faced the full weight of U.S. forces determined to keep communism out of the Indochinese hinterland.

But as the guerrillas took power and ties with neighbouring China deteriorated, the partnership became vital in the survival of Laos.

Soviet aid to the country's scattered four million inhabitants was their only reliable source of funds to rebuild a shattered economy and shunt Laos into the 20th century.

Few people believe the marriage was particularly successful, but few doubt Laos would have been worse off without it.

"I feel sorry for the Soviets. They did their best here, but in concrete terms I think Soviet and Laos were quite bewildered by each other," said one diplomat.

Many Soviet projects were too cumbersome for a scattered agrarian economy in the sweltering heart of Asia.

Burmese troops clash with rebels, kill civilians

BANGKOK (AP) — Government bombers have killed civilians in attacks meant to root out guerrillas concealed by jungle, guerrilla officials said Monday.

Burmese troops and Karen guerrillas have clashed in the past week north of Burma's Salween River, said one Karen official, reached by telephone at the Thai frontier. He spoke on condition of anonymity.

He said the fighting, with 400-500 soldiers on each side, was the first significant Burmese attack this dry season. The battle was continuing, with the government troops apparently trying to cut Karen communications northwest of the Karen headquarters at Inle lake, he added.

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